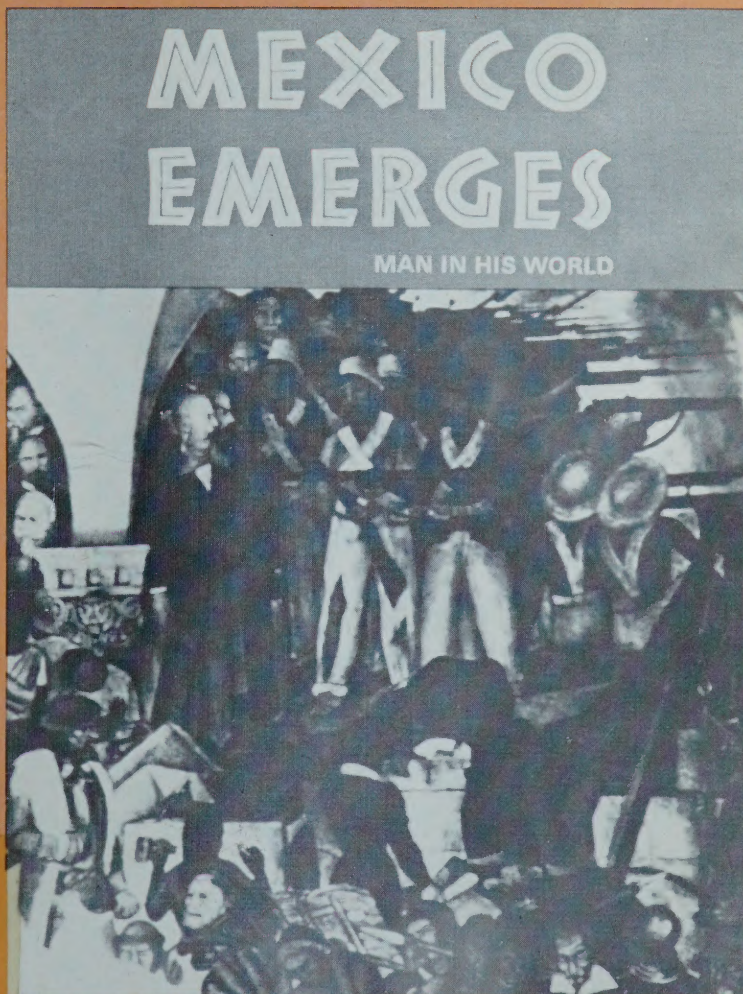




# Teachers' Guide

## MEXICO EMERGES



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## MAN IN HIS WORLD

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# Teachers' Guide

## MEXICO EMERGES



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### OBJECTIVES

The main criterion behind the selection of material for this book has been that it inspire students to formulate hypotheses. From these hypotheses, generalizations concerning the emergence of contemporary Mexico can be developed.

1. Students are encouraged to consider Mexico as a mosaic of landscapes. Desert, savanna, tropical forest, high tableland and rugged mountain combine to create a country of great variety.
2. Students are made aware that the Indians' system of growing corn led them to formal religion, with its attendant astronomical observations, sophisticated calendar and mathematics.
3. Students can hypothesize that the Conquest deliberately destroyed works of art, cities, architecture and records of Indian civilization in order to subjugate and Christianize the natives and to acquire gold and silver.
4. Evidence is provided to indicate that the struggle for Mexican Independence brought about one hundred years of war, bloodshed and death.
5. Students can contemplate the continuation of the Mexican revolution as the country strives for modernity and success.

Since the list of facts and opinions about Mexico is interminable, it is reasonable that specific knowledge be sampled rather than covered exhaustively. A clearer understanding of ideas will result from thorough study in a few significant areas than from a general survey.

When an individual student becomes interested in an idea, he tends to discuss it with his peers and friends rather than with his teacher. *Mexico Emerges* utilizes this fact to advantage by encouraging students to divide into small groups, compare notes and determine their thoughts and feelings about the material presented. Initial involvement is thereby followed by the necessary emotional and conceptual grasp of an experience.

When the teacher brings the class back together, he faces the problem of capitalizing on the variety of ideas the students have formulated. If the teacher can create a sense of common purpose, where cooperation rather than competition is dominant and where members of the class join forces to cope with some problem, achieve some objective, meet some demand, the true process of education is actualized.

### OUTLINE

#### 1. MEXICO EMERGES (Pages 1 – 10)

The purpose of the first section is to illustrate the kaleidoscopic nature of Mexico. By becoming aware of the vital, dynamic nature of Mexico City, its rich history, geologic past, and contrasting components, the student can acquire a foundation on which to build his learning of subsequent information.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Mexico City is the oldest city on the continent of North America. It was developed from an ancient Aztec town called Tenochtitlán.

#### THINGS TO DO

1. Find out how you would get to Mexico City by air.

2761898

### THINGS TO DO

Find out about: Montezuma  
Cortes  
Diego Rivera  
September 16, 1810.  
Discuss the frescoes in the palace.

Consider the material available in these little inserts. Volcanism, earthquakes, Indians, age, population, history and building problems are some of the topics which could be pursued.

Here is another opportunity to apply the approach outlined in *Gifts of the Nile*, involving the non-historical exercise in thought process, (page 4).

Throughout *Mexico Emerges*, the student is encouraged to move back and forth in order to solve problems. While the book has numbered pages, nothing dictates following a linear order.

The frescoes, for instance, are shown on the cover and mentioned on page 5. Montezuma and Cortes are both referred to on pages 49 and 50. The 1810 incident is discussed on pages 53, 54 and 65.

The pictures and diagrams in this section should be used as springboards for discussion. Such material, used properly, promotes divergent thinking, curiosity, questioning and creative explanation. Ideas and opinions expressed foster active use of data rather than passive storage. The teacher should inquire: "What if?", "What do you feel when you look at?", "Do you like?", "Do you wonder?".

For example: Ask the students what colour they would use for the cover of the book. Ask them what emotions, events and time period they feel are portrayed. Any suggestions they have could be recorded and referred to again when they have completed their study of Mexico. In such exercises, powers of perception and imagination are flexed.

It is interesting to note that Diego Rivera's works were meant to glorify Mexico's past and to belittle her political opponents. The murals were intended to instruct and may seem little more than a vehicle for social and political propaganda. It is also worth pointing out that the fresco appeals to all persons, whether literate or not and was thus a suitable medium for Rivera's attempt to symbolize the Mexican Revolution. These ideas could be the teacher's contribution to the voluntary student discussion.

### THE MEXICAN CLIMATE (Pages 8 – 10)

The climate for an area is the result of interaction among a variety of controls, such as pressure systems, high mountains and large bodies of water.

A good exercise for alert students is to determine how the trade winds shift with the apparent movement of the sun north and south.

### II. A LOST CIVILIZATION (Pages 11 – 27)

The ancient Maya were truly a lost civilization. When Europeans first arrived in Central America, most of the natives they encountered had forgotten about their illustrious ancestors. Yet enough spectacular evidence existed to excite the curious and prompt the professional archaeologist to piece together a history of these fascinating people.

This chapter attempts to place the student in the role of archaeologist. His job is to interpret, evaluate and draw conclusions about Mayan society, using the evidence in the book. Rather than simply reading about the Maya, students will be able to write their own histories of them. Creative thinking will be needed to fill the gaps, allowing the expression of individual opinion. This approach encourages re-evaluation of ideas in the light of new evidence. Differences of opinion within the class stimulate further discussion and investigation.

### PALENQUE'S MYSTERY STORY (Page 11)

The discovery date (1945) is significant. It suggests that modern findings are contributing much and are necessary if the story of the ancient Maya's way of life is to be completely recovered. Before 1945, it was believed that the temple-like buildings were solid inside. The discovery of an inner tomb at Palenque changed the thinking on this topic. This story helps to establish the possibility that the Mayan society was structured with a priesthood class near the top. In conjunction with the four pictures on page 13, it would be worthwhile to examine many other pictures of Mayan ruins. The shape and structure of most of the ruins suggest that they were formerly places of worship or palaces. Elaborate stonework and design indicate that the Maya possessed great skill and craftsmanship.

The map of archaeological activity (page 14) helps to locate the sites of Mayan building discoveries. Try to match the central sites with mountainous terrain and tropical forest. This exercise helps to explain why it was difficult to locate ancient sites and why the Maya migrated regularly.

Fast growing crops provided free time for other activities. Three are indicated (page 16): public construction, games and trade. In determining methods of construction, utilize what has been uncovered about the building methods of other ancient societies. A comparison with Egyptian pyramid building is possible. Try to decide how pok-ta-pok is played by examining the remains of a playing field. The doughnut shaped stone on the wall is an important piece of evidence. This game was played throughout Central America and was



adapted by later societies. Much can be learned about the game by studying detailed descriptions of people such as the Aztec.

In determining trade possibilities, the student must discover who the Maya had as neighbours. Be sure to consider both space and time. The finding of objects not natural to the Mayan environment is often the only evidence the archaeologist has that trade existed.

### THE MAYAN GODS (Page 19)

Many Mayan buildings were decorated with carvings in stone. Examination of these figure-gods will help in understanding Mayan worship and beliefs. The diagram of Yum Kax, the corn god, feeding the soil god indicates how important agriculture was to the Maya.

### THE STELA (Page 20)

Stelae may be used to establish the age of Mayan sites. Although some dates are given on page 21, with a greater knowledge of the number system (page 23) and the calendar (page 22), students can learn to read the dates on the actual stelae. Why not find pictures of other stelae and attempt to interpret them? Perhaps the class could construct stelae for founding dates of cities in their own area. In Mexico the oldest cities are located in the central mountain area while the youngest are in the Yucatan peninsula. This pattern suggests a possible direction of migration.

An agricultural society is highly dependent upon the natural elements. The priests studied these phenomena in order to accurately predict for the people such things as favourable times for planting and harvesting crops. The Maya believed that the stars controlled their lives. The priests studied the stars so that both national and personal events could be scheduled to complement the patterns of celestial bodies. The horoscope studies show that such beliefs are still prevalent today. It is not surprising that the priests developed a calendar. What is remarkable is its degree of accuracy. Students should take time to study the Mayan calendar in detail and compare it with our own.

### MAYAN WRITING (Page 24)

An excellent way to learn about people of the past is to read documents written by them. Several problems exist in using this approach when studying the Maya.

1. Little written material has been discovered.
2. Their hieroglyphic method of writing is very difficult to interpret.

The teacher should use these exercises to stress the importance of preserving current manuscripts for future generations in such places as provincial and national archives.

For the section on the well at Chichén Itzá, have the class imagine that they are a class 1000 years from now. Take a pail and fill it with a number of items which represent our way of life, for instance: a golf ball, pen, wrist-watch, car keys, coca-cola bottle, plastic records, slide rule, pair of glasses, coins. Take the items out of the pail one at a time and have the students identify them and relate them to our society. Have them suggest other things that could have gone into the pail which would have given a good indication of the way we live. Now when the class examines the findings from the well at Chichén Itzá, they should be able to better appreciate their significance. Do not let them forget that, according to the legend, the well was sacred. This has a great bearing on what would be thrown into it as gifts for the gods.

Among the favourite hunting places for archaeologists are old garbage dumps (middens). Here they find things that the ancient society has discarded.

The final lesson (page 27) should give the class an opportunity to evaluate the total society. Were the Maya really a civilization? Look for the things which have lasting value. Compare their society with ours and with other great societies of civilization. The closer in time to the Mayan, the more enlightening the comparison becomes.

### III. THE AZTECS (Pages 28 — 48)

In discussing Aztec worship, reference should be made to the pictures and diagrams on pages 28 and 40. The actual sacrificial stone is on display in Mexico's National Museum of Anthropology and is mentioned again on page 45.

The Did You Know? section on page 29 and the one on page 31 can be linked. Other national groups in history have legends of their early wanderings until divine guidance led them to their final haven.

In answering the questions, students will come to a realization that the Aztec religion and value system were different from our own. The gods listed on pages 43 and 44 had to be appeased, in order to guarantee a climate in which corn and other foods could survive. It was considered an honour for a human to die for such a cause.

The "sacrificial knife" pictured on page 28 was made of obsidian glass formed by the once-active volcanoes. The Aztecs had not mastered the art of working in iron.

The children of the sacrificial victim would become the special charge of the priests and, because of their selective ancestry, probably be trained for high office in religion, administration or the military.



The questions on pages 31 and 32 give the student an opportunity to think, analyse and hypothesize. Possible reasons for the difference in the two civilizations might be:

- the development of metal-working skill in the old world
- the lack of coal and iron ore deposits in close proximity to one another in America
- the degree to which land and sea travel and communication were less arduous in the old world
- the greater pressure of population to force progress and development in the old world.

Tin, iron and nickel are common metals not mentioned, perhaps because of the lack of these ores or because of the absence of coal deposits in the area. America was still only at the Stone Age level of development, with a much more primitive civilization when Europeans “discovered” it. If conditions had been reversed we can only conjecture that the birthplace of our western civilization might have been in America rather than in “the old world”. The students might be encouraged to indulge here in some of the “if’s” of history.

The camel, donkey and llama can be used as examples of pack animals while the horse and ox are more commonly thought of as draught animals.

The absence of domesticated food animals made the people more dependent on corn and seasonal agriculture crops. The vagaries of weather thus became a serious matter reflected in their religion. Without pack animals trade was restricted and tribal areas were much more insular. Products and knowledge were not disseminated to the same extent. The absence of draught animals did not foster the invention of vehicles such as buckboards, wagons, and chariots. Warfare remained in the hands of “the infantry”.

Did these conditions which forced the Mexicans to be a cereal-eating people and their own “beasts of burden” restrict their advancement? Why? Advancement towards what? These are interesting points for discussion. Certainly the absence of draught animals plus the presence of rough terrain were contributing factors.

### TENOCHTITLÁN IN 1519 (Page 32)

Through information and searching questions, this section is intended to encourage the students to create their own image of the ancient Aztec capital.

The map on page 34 shows the north, south and west causeways leading to the island capital with the twin-shrined pyramid in the center.

The island position afforded protection against attack both by rival tribes and by wild animals.

The island would also have a ready source of water for the growing of crops and would undoubtedly be fertile land.

A growing island city would soon need additional food, drinking water, building stone, wood, precious metals, jewels and other articles of trade such as those shown on page 36.

The saline, impure waters of the lake necessitated the importation of fresh spring water from Chapultepec. Without pipes of galvanized iron, copper, lead or plastic and without our modern pressure systems the Aztecs ingeniously created level open aqueducts of stone and mortar.

In dealing with building materials, students must first ascertain the meaning of these words and perhaps obtain pictures of the varying types of homes. Then they can conjecture on the source of each material, whether it would come from the island itself, from the surrounding fields or from the mountains of the Mexican Plateau. The heavier materials might be floated on wooden rafts down the rivers into Lake Texcoco, dragged by many men or rolled across short distances with great wooden pries.

Steel, glass and plastic are some of the missing building materials.

Make sure the students have found pictures of the canal-like streets of modern Venice before they make their comparison. They might also hypothesize on why Venetian canals have remained water-filled throughout all these centuries.

Earth-filled floating boats built of reeds extended the agriculture acreage as population pressures increased. Gradually the floating chinampas became part of the mainland and extended the island’s size.

### THE VALLEY OF MEXICO IN AZTEC TIMES (Page 34)

The questions are designed to have the students make as much use as possible of the map and its legend. Chapultepec has been mentioned on pages 3 and 33. Teotihuacán is more fully described on page 42 and mention of the two extinct volcanoes Itzacihuatl and Popocatepetl can lead to a review of Parícutin on page 10 or stories of modern day eruption of Mount Etna on the island of Sicily.

Water draining off and through the land dissolves the various chemicals present in the soil and as the water evaporates in the lake the concentration of residual salts steadily increases.

The dike across the lake was to keep back the salt waters which would injure the growing plants in the chinampas. Students might be encouraged to add solutions of sodium chloride (common salt)



or calcium chloride (used to lay dust on unpaved roads) to growing plants.

Suggested causes of the shrinking lake size:

- the gradual warming of the climate in the wake of our last ice age
- other climatic changes such as reduced rainfall
- man's destruction of the forest cover of the plains and mountains of the plateau permitting far greater evaporation.

## **GREATEST EXTENT OF THE AZTEC EMPIRE (Page 35)**

One of the greatest problems of the Aztec Empire was protection from outside attack. To ensure safety and the loyalty of subject tribes, a large army was required. Much of the resultant heavy demands for men, food and weapons were collected from the conquered tribes in the form of taxes and/or tribute.

Law and order had to be maintained in the provinces, justice administered, religious practices regulated, agriculture, mining and craftsmanship protected and trade encouraged. Good administrators, loyal to the Montezuma, had to be appointed; constant communication through oral and written directives were required.

Students will be interested in the various objects of Aztec tribute and their use. They will quickly see the need of a writing and numeral system. Individual students will classify the tax objects differently, but justifying decisions stimulates thought, reasoning and articulation.

## **HOW THE AZTECS COUNTED (Page 37)**

The students can be reminded that the base twenty numeral system was not confined to the Aztecs alone. "Score" is still an acceptable numeral in our language. "Three score and ten years" apparently made sense in Biblical times and "Four score and seven" to Abraham Lincoln.

## **AZTEC SCHOOLS (Page 38)**

The first question allows for free expression on the part of the students who, in the process, may learn objectivity and recognize the reasoning behind our own educational emphases.

As in farm-life to-day, the greatest training ground for Aztec youth was around the home establishment. Working together at common family tasks prevents any artificial generation gap which our industrialized society might produce.

In the making of weapons the obsidian glass from volcanic deposits would be mounted on a wooden shaft or base.

Discussing qualities of Aztec citizenship naturally leads to a comparison of what we expect of "a good citizen".

Here is the Athenian youth pledge of citizenship. This had to be recited in public and no doubt contributed to the supremacy of Greek culture and civilization for a period of three or four centuries:

"We will never bring disgrace to this city by any act of dishonesty or cowardice, nor ever desert our suffering comrades in the ranks.

"We will fight for the ideals and sacred things of the city, both singly and together. We will revere and obey the city's laws and do our best to incite a like respect and reverence in those above us who are prone to annul or set them at naught.

"We will strive unceasingly to quicken the public sense of civic duty. Thus in all these ways we will transmit this city not only not less but greater, better and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us."

## **BOOKS AND WRITING (Page 38)**

Sentiment and emotion can only be communicated in a highly-developed written language. This was impossible in simple pictograms which were restricted to symbolizing objects and perhaps simple action. The Aztec poem, however, transmitted orally to one who could put it in writing, shows that the Aztecs were capable of philosophic reflection and deep feelings.

## **AZTEC RELIGION (Page 40)**

From the picture and plan, have the students estimate what area within the Serpent Wall would be available for a standing audience to view the ceremonies atop the pyramid-shaped Great Temple with its twin shrines. In a ten by ten foot square of the classroom floor, have the students experiment to discover how many of their number they can crowd in with room to shuffle and turn. The Sacred Precinct's capacity can then be calculated and compared to the population of Tenochtitlan City (page 32).

By this time the students will likely recognize that in the theo-democracy of the Aztec capital, preference was given to the religious, administrative and military leaders and their subordinates.

The city square has always been thought of as the meeting place where official functions are performed. Like the agora of ancient Greek cities it personifies the heart and soul of the city. Perhaps Toronto's Nathan Philips' Square comes closest to a modern revival of this concept.



The physical structure and religious significance of the serpent wall helped to ward off local vandals or marauding invaders, protecting the hallowed and priceless treasures of the Sacred Precinct.

Since the success and safety of the Aztec ruler was dependent upon the blessings and support of the religious leaders, he always remained close to this source of power.

#### **THE GOVERNMENT IN THE CITY STATE OF TENOCHTITLAN (Page 41)**

This section is designed to give students an idea of the systematic organization of the Aztec government. On the bottom of the pyramid will be written "All the families" (note the city's population on page 32), and on the top line "Chief Speaker". The diagram should be completed and titled.

Students can create similar diagrams for school, sports organizations or various governments.

#### **THE PYRAMIDS OF TEOTIHUACÁN (Page 42)**

We can only conjecture about the reason for the deserted temple and city. The Teotihuacáns may have left when the forests and streams disappeared or the soil became bankrupt.

Egypt's pyramids were built around 2600 B.C. and Teotihuacán's about 400 A.D. Egypt's were elaborate tombs to hide and protect the dead and the accompanying treasures. Those at Teotihuacán were simply temples.

#### **AZTEC CALENDAR STONE (Page 45)**

If the students keep in mind that a solar year is approximately  $365\frac{1}{4}$  days in length, they should have no difficulty in their calculations. They may however be confused by the system of having two sets of months running simultaneously. The religious month starting 1 Flower would of course end 13 Rabbit. The 52 year era may be roughly compared to our century.

#### **IV. SPAIN'S THREE HUNDRED YEARS IN MEXICO (Pages 49 – 53)**

Supplementary material can be readily obtained from most books on Cortes, New World Explorers or Mexico found in most school or classroom libraries. (See page 82).

#### **V. MEXICAN INDEPENDENCE (Pages 53 – 77)**

The point from which an historical event is observed is defined as perspective. It is important that students recognize the particular perspective brought to a problem, and that any historical

event, such as Mexican Independence, may be viewed from a number of perspectives.

The class has considered the damage done to Mexican culture by the Spaniards, probably from the Mexican point of view. They could try a different perspective, for example, that of a Spaniard. Similarly, the erosion of Mexican territory by the United States of America will evoke different feelings according to the perspective taken. Pepe and Carlos put themselves in the shoes of the Americans, yet they are unable to escape their feelings, and in this sense history is not past to them, but present. They will apply the values and concepts of their past to themselves and their society. Students should be encouraged to do the same. The pictures on page 57 illustrate different artistic perspectives and prompt students to exercise a variety of attitudes themselves.

An exercise involving border disputes with Canada and the U.S.A. could form a valuable research project, with groups choosing to represent one perspective or the other.

#### **THE INVASION AND CAPTURE OF MEXICO CITY (Pages 62 – 65)**

This provides an excellent opportunity for students to work in groups, comparing notes and exchanging ideas based on each of the battles.

Each group can decide which of the opposing forces it wishes to be and then weigh the pros and cons of various modes of action, based on the questions in the text and others suggested by the teacher, for example:

What type of weapons would each side have?

Would your plans or the outcome of the battle change if:

(a) it had been raining for six days?

(b) there had been much disease among the soldiers on one side?

(c) the defenders had been attacked from behind?

(d) it had taken place in 1942? in 1972?

Although the outcome of each battle is obvious, the student can determine exactly how the battle was won by finding some means of translating the Spanish sections in the text or by referring to texts in the bibliography.

With this method of presentation, the student learns more about the landscape of Mexico and is also introduced to the language of the country. Pictures and recordings would be an excellent follow-up. The details of maps and the type of questions should vary according to the ability of the class.

This method of presentation could be used for other battles, such as the Canadian conflict on the Plains of Abraham or selected incidents from the War of 1812.



## REVOLUTION OF 1910 (Pages 65 – 68)

There is an opportunity for group activity in examining O’Gorman’s picture. Let each group list the emotions they observe. Bring the class together and recite a list of words showing a bias opposite to the one O’Gorman illustrated. Ask the class to attempt a portrayal of these different emotions.

The list of names on page 66 focuses on the disciplines of research. Each student or group of students may now deal with facts and opinions. The teacher should demand some evidence to back any opinion offered and encourage those in the class interested in reading more about the people on the list.

## THE CAUSES OF THE REVOLUTION (Pages 68 – 74)

The sketches of Revolutionaries suggest that the common people of Mexico did not feel that the country belonged to them. They appear ready to do something to change this. The thirteen men who controlled over half of the major corporations are obviously in danger of losing their power.

The four P’s are Pan o Palo, Plato o Plomo: bread or club, silver or lead. “Eminent domain” means the right or power of the state to take private property for public use or to control its use, usually with an adequate compensation.

## IS THERE ANY WONDER — THEY REVOLTED? (Page 72)

The main intention here is to allow students to experience some emotion: anger, sorrow, surprise, disgust. The method of dealing with these emotions should be the problem they are encouraged to consider.

## THE OPPOSITION TO DIAZ (Page 74)

This section demonstrates the effect of environment on people’s thinking. Have the students consider the effect on Canadians of living next door to the United States. Do Canadians emulate the American way of life? Have the students consider the legends of men living in Canada’s north. Do they reflect the harsh environment?

As land owners required more cane, they also wanted more land, water and cheap labour. As peasants lost their land rights and became more slavish, they fled and joined the revolutionary forces.

Zapata was a peasant from Morelos. He collected men and women to raid sugar plantations. He wanted land for his followers. He was later tricked into a trap and shot to death by other revolutionary factions.

## THINGS TO DO (Page 76)

Teachers interested in illuminating booklets on the subjects mentioned can write to:

Fischgrund Apartado,  
Postal 2071,  
Mexico, D.F.

and ask for *Mexican Native Costumes*, *Mexican Native Arts and Crafts* and *Mexican Native Dances*.

## VI. MODERN MEXICO (Pages 78 – 82)

A “hidden export” (page 81) is an activity that brings foreign currency into a country without goods being sent out of the country in exchange. In this sense, Mexico sells its sunshine, beaches and way of life as attractions to visitors. Valuable comparisons can be made to the tourist industry in Canada.

Any opportunity to visit the Mexico of today or learn about its current development provides useful amplifications of *Mexico Emerges*.

Teacher’s Guide: *Mexico Emerges*

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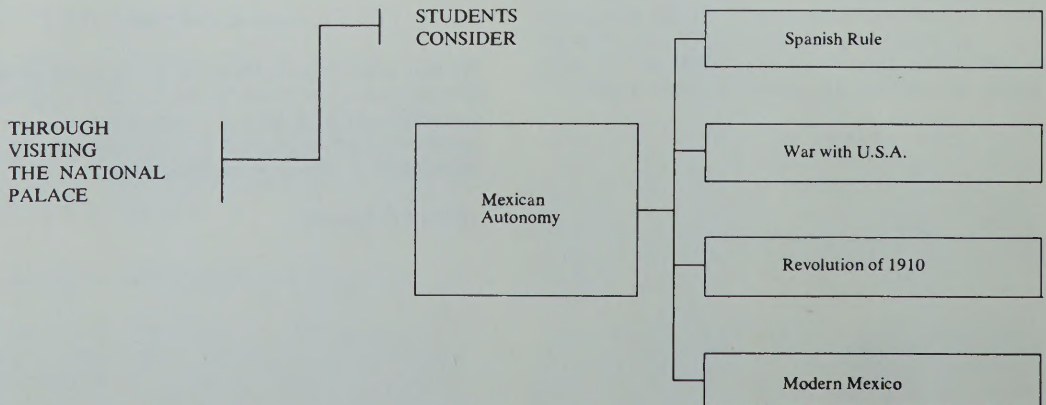
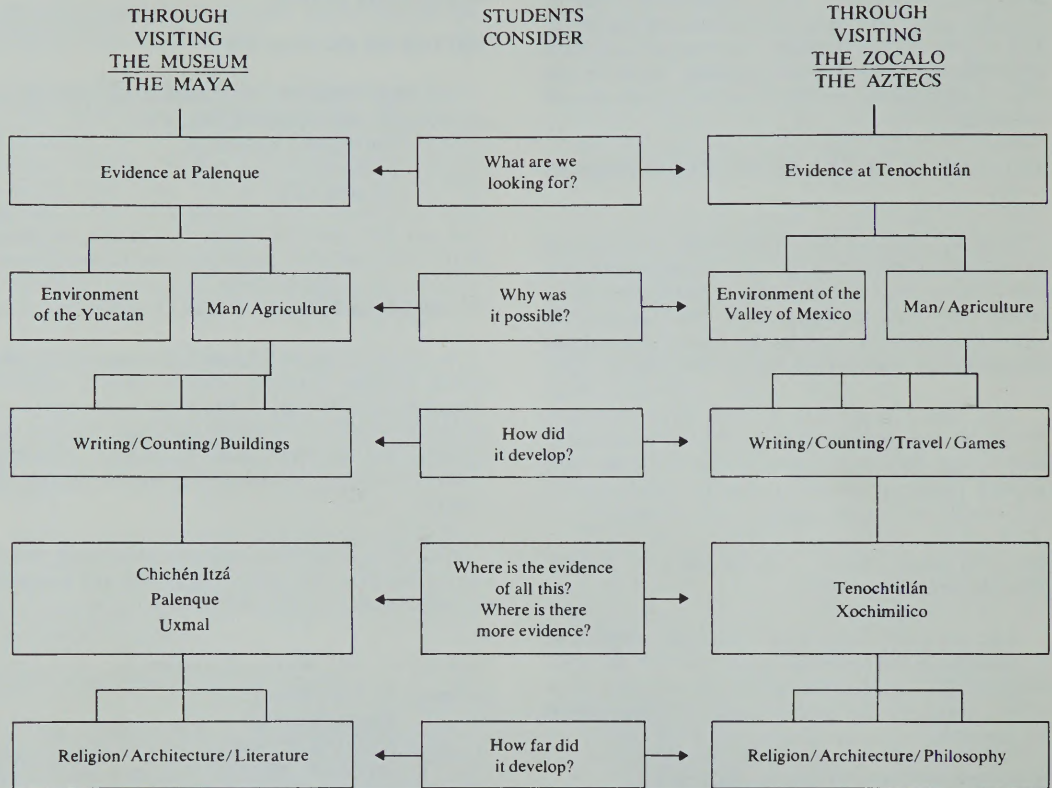
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## MEXICO EMERGES

A Class of Mexican Students  
Exposed to various stimuli:  
Market/National Palace/Zocalo/Museum/Opera/Castle





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